

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LAGOS 04763 01 OF 02 171149Z
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 LAGOS 4763

USICA

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: N/A
SUBJECT: NEWS AGENCY OF NIGERIA (NAN) OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED;
REQUESTS EXTENSIVE FACILITATIVE ASSISTANCE

REF: LAGOS 1855

1. THE NEWS AGENCY OF NIGERIA (NAN) WAS OFFICIALLY
LAUNCHED ON MARCH 16, 1978. THE IMPLEMENTATION TASK
FORCE, ESTABLISHED IN 1976, WAS DISSOLVED AND A NINE-MEMBER
BOARD OF DIRECTORS, HEADED BY PROFESSOR ALFRED OPUBOR OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS, HAS BEEN APPOINTED BY THE FEDERAL
MILITARY GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA. OTHER MEMBERS OF THE
BOARD ARE LISTED IN PARA 9 BELOW.

2. MR. ONUORA NZEKWU, FORMERLY THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF
THE FEDERAL MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND A WELL-KNOWN
NIGERIAN NOVELIST, HAS BEEN APPOINTED GENERAL MANAGER.
MR. V.O. ADEFELA HAS BEEN APPOINTED EDITOR-IN-CHIEF. SIX
SUB-EDITORS HAVE ALSO BEEN NAMED.
THE POST HAS BEEN IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH NAN OFFICIALS
AND THE INFORMATION REQUESTED BY MR. ADEFELA ON BLACK
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PAGE 02 LAGOS 04763 01 OF 02 171149Z

AMERICAN NEWS AGENCIES AND PAPERS IN THE REFERENCE
MESSAGE HAS BEEN PASSED ON TO HIM. THE POST ALSO
FACILITATED ADEFELA'S PARTICIPATION IN THE RECENT TUFT'S
UNIVERSITY SPONSORED CAIRO CONFERENCE ON INTERNATIONAL
NEWS MEDIA AND THE DEVELOPING WORLD. ADEPOLA STAYED
ON IN CAIRO TO MEET WITH MENA OFFICIALS AND OBSERVE ITS
OPERATIONS.

3. IN THE PAST FEW DAYS, THE NEWLY APPOINTED PERMANENT BOARD OF DIRECTORS HELD ITS FIRST MEETING. THE BOARD INHERITED THE TASK FORCE'S TARGET DATE FOR NAN TO BE FULLY OPERATIONAL BY OCTOBER 1, 1978. WHILE NAN OFFICIALS REALIZE THE DIFFICULTY OF MEETING THIS DEADLINE, THEY ARE MAKING EVERY EFFORT TO MEET IT. TO-DATE, ONLY A HANDFUL OF PERSONNEL ARE IN PLACE AND VERY LITTLE CONCRETE PLANNING HAS TRANSPIRED.

4. THE GENERAL MANAGER HAS SOUGHT THE POST'S ASSISTANCE ON A WIDE RANGE OF PROBLEMS, WHICH MUST BE RESOLVED BEFORE NAN CAN GET OFF THE GROUND. THE NEEDS FALL INTO FOUR GENERAL CATEGORIES: A) SHORT-TERM CONSULTANTS TO HELP SET UP NAN; B) INFORMATION AND COSTS OF COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT NEEDED; C) EXECUTIVE-LEVEL VISITS TO AP AND UPI IN NEW YORK; AND D) ON-THE-JOB TRAINING OF PERSONNEL AND STAFF IN THE U.S.

5. FOLLOWING ARE THE SPECIFIC DETAILS FOR EACH OF THE ABOVE REQUIREMENTS:

(A) CONSULTANTS: NAN WISHES TO EMPLOY THE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES OF THREE CONSULTANTS FOR PERIODS OF FROM TWO TO THREE MONTHS EACH BEGINNING IN JUNE OR JULY, 1978. THESE ADVISORS SHOULD BE THOROUGHLY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 LAGOS 04763 01 OF 02 171149Z

FAMILIAR WITH ALL PHASES OF THE NEWS AGENCY BUSINESS AND THEY SHOULD BE EXPERTS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE FIELDS. THEY MAY BE RETIRED PERSONS OR POSSIBLY EXECUTIVES ON LEAVE FROM THEIR FIRMS.

I) COMMERCIAL AND TRAFFIC MANAGER - TO ADVISE ON ALL COMMERCIAL ASPECTS OF OPERATING A NATIONAL NEWS SERVICE, INCLUDING THE SERVICING OF CLIENTS, ESTABLISHING ACCOUNTS, PROVIDING TRAINING FOR SALES REPRESENTATIVES, ETC. FURTHER, THE CONSULTANT SHOULD BE ABLE TO OFFER ADVICE ON THE MOVEMENT OF NEWS, SCHEDULING, TAILORING SPECIAL SERVICES TO PARTICULAR CLIENT NEEDS, ETC. KNOWLEDGE OF MARKETING WIRE SERVICES OVERSEAS, WHILE NOT ESSENTIAL, IS DESIRABLE.

II) TECHNICAL CONSULTANT - TO DESIGN A BACK-UP COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM TO INTERFACE WITH THE CURRENT TELECOMMUNICATION FACILITIES OF THE NIGERIAN POST AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORK, AND THE VARIOUS TELECOMMUNICATIONS PROJECTS CURRENTLY BEING BUILT UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS. RECOMMEND TYPES OF EQUIPMENT NEEDED

FOR IMMEDIATE OPERATIONAL NEEDS, AS WELL AS LONG-TERM REQUIREMENTS. OUTLINE A TRAINING PROGRAM FOR THE TECHNICAL STAFF. SERVE AS AN ADVISER TO NAN'S SENIOR ENGINEER. ASSIST IN THE PREPARATION AND SCREENING OF BIDS. POSSIBLY PARTICIPATE IN THE INSTALLATION, SUPERVISION AND TESTING OF THE SYSTEM.

III) GENERAL MANAGER - TO ASSIST THE NAN GENERAL MANAGER IN THE OVERALL EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT, SUPERVISION AND DIRECTION ON A DAY-TO-DAY BASIS. OFFER GUIDANCE ON PERSONNEL AND BUDGET MATTERS, RECRUITMENT, FINANCING, ADMINISTRATION, TRAINING, EDITORIAL POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT OF LONG-TERM GUIDELINES.

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PAGE 04 LAGOS 04763 01 OF 02 171149Z

(B) INFORMATION AND COSTS OF COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT.

GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE TYPE AND DESIGN OF EQUIPMENT CURRENTLY ON THE MARKET IN THE U.S. AND DETAILS ON THE SYSTEMS BEING USED BY AP AND UPI; APPROXIMATE COSTS TO SET UP A SYSTEM IN NIGERIA WITH FIVE ZONAL OFFICES CONNECTED TO LAGOS.

(C) VISITS TO ASSOCIATED PRESS AND UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL IN NEW YORK: THE GENERAL MANAGER OF NAN, MR. NZEKWU, WISHES TO VISIT BOTH AP AND UPI IN NEWYORK FOR APPROXIMATELY THREE DAYS EACH BEFORE MAY 15. ADVISE IF AP AND UPI ARE WILLING TO ARRANGE DETAILED BRIEFINGS OF THEIR OPERATIONS. (FYI: NAN INTENDS TO SUBSCRIBE TO ONE U.S. WIRE SERVICE. NO FINAL DECISION HAS BEEN MADE YET. THE POST ARRANGED MEETINGS BETWEEN NAN OFFICIALS AND AP AND UPI HERE WHILE THEY WERE COVERING PRESIDENT CARTER'S STATE VISIT. END FYI). FOLLOWING MR. NZEKWU'S VISIT, NAN WOULD LIKE TO SEND ITS EDITOR-IN-CHIEF AND ITS SENIOR ENGINEER FOR SHORT PERIODS (I.E., 3 TO 5 DAYS) OF ORIENTATION AND FAMILIARIZATION WITH BOTH AP AND UPI. APPROXIMATE TIMING WOULD BE LATE MAY OR EARLY JUNE, WITH FOLLOW-UP VISITS OF SHORTER DURATION LATER IN THE SUMMER AND POSSIBLY INTO THE FALL. ADVISE IF EITHER OR BOTH WIRE SERVICES ARE WILLING TO OFFER THIS TYPE OF ASSISTANCE.

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PAGE 01 LAGOS 04763 02 OF 02 171110Z
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 LAGOS 4763

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(D) ON-THE-JOB TRAINING FOR NAN REPORTERS AND
TECHNICAL SUPPORT STAFF: NAN WISHES TO SEND TWO
TEAMS TO THE U.S. FOR ON-THE-JOB TRAINING AND
ASSIGNMENTS FOR THREE TO FOUR WEEKS WITH AP AND UPI.
EACH TEAM WOULD BE MADE UP OF TWO EDITORIAL STAFFERS
AND ONE TECHNICIAN. THEY HOPE TO BEGIN THESE TRAINING
PROGRAMS IN LATE MAY OR EARLY JUNE. ADVISE IF THESE
PROGRAMS CAN BE ARRANGED AND APPROXIMATE COSTS FOR
EACH TRAINEE.

6. ALL COSTS CONNECTED WITH THE CONSULTANTS,
OBSERVATION ISITS, AND ON-THE-JOB TRAINING, ARE
TO BE PAID BY NAN. THE NEXT MEETING OF NAN'S BOARD IS
SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 27. NZEKWU ASKS IF BIODATA ON THE
PROSPECTIVE CONSULTANTS COULD BE AVAILABLE BY APRIL 26.
IF POSSIBLE, TWO CANDIDATES SHOULD BE OFFERED FOR EACH
CONSULTANCY, ALONG WITH APPROXIMATE COSTS AND ANY SPECIAL
REQUIREMENTS OR LIMITATIONS. IT WOULD ALSO BE HIGHLY
USEFUL IF PRELIMINARY REACTIONS COULD BE SOUGHT FROM AP
AND UPI REGARDING THE FEASIBILITY OF NAN'S OVERALL
TRAINING REQUESTS.

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PAGE 02 LAGOS 04763 02 OF 02 171110Z

7. MR. NZEKWU INDICATED IN HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH THE
INFORMATION OFFICER THAT HE HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED
BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO SEEK SIMILAR ASSISTANCE
FROM THE U.K. (I.E., REUTERS) AND FROM THE U.S.S.R.
(I.E., TASS). THESE EMBASSIES ARE BEING APPROACHED

SIMULTANEOUSLY AND ASKED TO PROVIDE CURRICULA VITAE FOR THE CONSULTANTS AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES DESCRIBED ABOVE. TANJUN OF YUGOSLAVIA MAY ALSO BE APPROACHED. NZEKWU AND HIS SENIOR STAFF, IN ALL PROBABILITY, WILL BE VISITING THESE COUNTRIES TO OBSERVE THEIR WIRE SERVICE OPERATIONS FIRST HAND.

8. HE AGAIN STRESSED THE BOARD'S DETERMINATION TO DO ITS UTMOST TO MEET THE OCTOBER 1 TARGET DATE. OBVIOUSLY, THE TARGET DATE IS UNREALISTIC, BUT THE BOARD IS RELUCTANT TO SEEK MORE TIME FROM THE GOVERNMENT UNTIL THEY HAVE MADE A SDUIOUS EFFORT AND HAVE SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE TO BACK UP THEIR REQUEST FOR MORE TIME85 COMMENT: IT MAY BE THAT THEY ARE RELUCTANT TO EMBARRASS THE TASK FORCE, WHICH APPEARS TO HAVE ACCOMPLISHED LITTLE IN THE TWO YEARS OF ITS EXISTENCE. END COMMENT. THE POST FEELS IT HAS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO PLAY A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN THE INITIAL STAGES OF NAN AND HOPES ICA WILL GIVE THIS REQUEST HIGH PRIORITY. ADVISE.

9. MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORTBN NEW AGENCY OF NIGERIA (NAN):

PROFESSOR ALFRED OPUBOR

HEAD, DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION, UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS

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PAGE 03 LAGOS 04763 02 OF 02 171110Z

MR. I.S. MOEMEKE

CHAIRMAN, NIGERIAN ASSOCIATION OF ADVERTISING PRACTITIONERS (NAAP)

MR. L. E. SCOTT-EMUAKPOR

DIRECTOR, FEDERAL MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

MR. E.A. AMONA

TITLE TO FOLLOW

MALAM MAMMAN DAURA

TITLE TO FOLLOW

MRS. ADUKE MOORE

LAWYER

MR. TOM BORHA

JOURNALIST

MR. GEORGE BAKO

DIRECTOR-GENERAL, NIGERIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

MR. SEGUN OLUSOLA

DIRECTOR-GENERAL, NIGERIAN TELEVISION

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